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Cap<sup>o</sup> Noy

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MR. LYMAN'S

ELECTION.

SERMON.

At H<sup>o</sup> MAY 30, 1787. A. M.

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# COMMONWEALTH of MASSACHUSETTS.

IN SENATE, May 30, 1787.

ORDERED, That *Cotton Tufts, Josiah Thatcher*  
and *Elijah Dwight, Esq'rs.* be a Committee  
to wait on the Reverend Mr. LYMAN, and thank  
him, in the name of the Senate, for the SERMON  
delivered by him this day, before his Excellency  
the Governour, the Council, and the two branches  
of the General Court ; and also to request of him  
a copy for the press.

**Attest.**

S A M U E L C O O P E R, Clerk.

A  
S E R M O N,

P R E A C H E D B E F O R E

H I S E X C E L L E N C Y J A M E S B O W D O I N , E s q .

G O V E R N O U R ;

H I S H O N O U R T H O M A S C U S H I N G , E s q .

L I E U T E N A N T - G O V E R N O U R ;

T H E H O N O U R A B L E T H E  
C O U N C I L , A N D T H E H O N O U R A B L E T H E  
S E N A T E , A N D H O U S E O F  
R E P R E S E N T A T I V E S ,

O F T H E C O M M O N W E A L T H O F

M A S S A C H U S E T T S ,

M A Y 30, 1787.

B E I N G T H E D A Y O F

G E N E R A L E L E C T I O N .

---

By Rev. JOSEPH LYMAN,

P A S T O R O F T H E C H U R C H I N H A T F I E L D .

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N. B. *The Address to His Excellency JOHN HANCOCK, Esq; Governour elect, was omitted in the delivery, as his choice and acceptance of the office, was not then declared.*

A N

## Election S E R M O N.

ROMANS, CHAP. XIII. VERSE 4, first clause.

*For he is the Minister of GOD to thee for good.*

IT is the appropriate privilege of christianity, to afford doctrines and precepts adapted to the circumstances of all characters of men. Other systems of morality are partial in their instructions, deficient in motives, and erroneous in the maxims of human life. But the author of our faith hath grounded our obligations upon a rational foundation, excited us to duty by suitable and efficient motives, and extended his instructions to every class of men. With equal regards he respects the wise and the noble, the uninstructed and him of low degree. To render his system the more beneficial, he has appointed ministers to explain its principles, and inculcate his saving doctrines upon men of all degrees ; to vindicate and magnify his institutions before Kings, and to preach the gospel to the poor.

AND

AND this is the minister's happiness, that he is ready furnished with instructions suited to every auditory before whom he may speak. All men need instruction, to be prompted to the discharge of their supreme obligations to God, and their relative obligations to each other. And this is their common privilege, that the blessed Jesus, by his written word and preached gospel, provides for all *a portion in due season.*

THE words selected for the basis of a discourse upon the present occasion, contain instruction for rulers ; to point them to the origin of their power and the use they should make of it : They comprise a lesson equally useful to subjects ; how to conduct themselves in relation to their rulers, and what views to entertain of their authority.

SHOULD the Preacher conform himself to the text, and place to view the solemn importance of it, the present occasion might be richly profitable to this great assembly. May that Divine Teacher, *who spake as never man spake*, by the aids of his Spirit, assist the Preacher *to find out acceptable words and the words of truth and soberness* ; to recommend his doctrines in their purity and power to his servants, now convened to learn the law in his sanctuary.

*For he is the minister of God to thee for good.*

OUR first enquiry is, Who is this minister of God? The context informs us, that *he is the civil magistrate*, called in a preceding passage, *the higher powers*, since the magistrate is raised in the community to a station above his brethren, and intrusted with authority to govern others, by ordaining and executing laws for the common good. That magistrates are designated by the Apostle, appears from his terming them, *Rulers who are not a terror to good works, but to the evil*; they are appointed to support good morals and punish vice. And this part of the description agrees with the civil magistrate, *He is a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil*: And as an acknowledgement of his services and dignity, he receives tribute. It is thus evident from the Apostle's calling him *the Higher Powers, the Ruler and the Revenger*, that the *civil magistrate* is intended by *the minister of God*. In speaking upon this subject, four general propositions will merit our attention, viz.

I. That civil authority is of divine institution.

II. That civil authority is instituted for the good of the people in general, and for the benefit of the church of Christ in particular.

III. What measures must the civil authority pursue to answer the end of their institution?

IV.

IV. What are the obligations of subjects to the civil authority?

1. Civil authority is of Divine institution.

*He is the minister of God.*

*Order is Heaven's first law.* Without it the gracious designs of the Creator cannot be accomplished. He has made his creatures of various powers and degrees; rising by an easy and happy gradation, from the lowest species of animals, to the most exalted rank of heavenly intelligencies. Creatures of the same species are constituted with certain differences, by which they greatly excel each other. Men, who are said to be born in a state of equality, are yet endowed with unequal measures of strength and wisdom. And hence there is a greater variety amongst men, than amongst several different species of animals. Some are qualified to teach and guide; others to be taught and led by their superiors. To affirm that in the qualifications to rule and guide, all men are equal, is to blend characters totally diverse, to confound wisdom with folly, and affability and condescension with ill-nature and pride. There have ever been distinctions in the world, and various degrees amongst men; while endowed with

with such various qualities and affections, the distinction will remain. To gainsay this distinction, is to counteract one of the principal laws of humanity. Some must be in authority ; others in subordination. And happy is that people who are allowed in Providence, to look out from among their brethren persons of the best disposition, and most aptly qualified to rule over them.

THAT particular persons should be distinguished and exalted in society, may be argued from the methods of Providence, ever since man hath been upon earth. No people were ever able to subsist for any length of time, without forming into some kind of civil government, and setting aside those boasted equalities, with which men are born into the world. They must be subject to some common rule and authority, in order to possess any measure of happiness and security. Where there are no rulers to govern the community, all things are immediately involved in confusion and misery. The continuance of our original equality, is a state of nature, and all ages have found a state of nature to be a state of war. Therefore it has pleased the common Parent of men, to lead them to a state of civil subordination, by which a part of the community are intrusted to ordain and carry into effect, laws and regulations for the whole.

THAT the establishment of civil government is by the counsel and wisdom of God, we are taught both from the history of his Providence, and the testimony of his inspired truth. Israel, the people of his love, were formed into a civil community, and made subordinate to established laws, to be administered by rulers appointed for that purpose. And it was a time of sore rebuke, when there was no magistrate in the land of sufficient authority, to put them in fear. The exaltation and degradation of rulers is the work of God, and not the production of a blind and fortuitous chance, according to the opinion of idle and infidel wits. For saith the word of enlightning truth, \* *Promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the Judge; he putteth down one and setteth up another.* The prerogative of ordaining magistracy and civil authority, belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ; this claim he assumes to himself under the name of Wisdom.† “*By me Kings reign and Princes decree justice. By me Princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth.*” These words imply the power of God, in supporting civil authority, and also his approbation of civil magistracy,

\* Psalm, lxxv. 6, 7.

† Prov. viii. 15, 16.

magistracy, as one of the blessings of the Redeemer's purchase. In what estimation the blessing of civil government is holden by God, may be learned from that apostolical direction to Titus, how to teach the flock of Christ. \* " *Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, and to obey magistrates.*" So far is Christ interested in the support of civil authority, that he will acknowledge those only to be his followers, who willingly obey rulers, and submit to their administrations.

But we need not go far for arguments : Our text is encompassed with proofs of the Divine institution of civil authority. The argument in the first verse, for subjection to the *higher powers*, is, *For there is no power, but of God : the powers that be, are ordained of God.* The reason alledged for not opposing *the power*, is in the second verse. *Whosoever resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God : and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.* Thrice in this argument the Apostle stiles the magistrate, *God's minister* ; that is, a public servant appointed by God. He is stiled also *God's revenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil.* And Christians must needs be subject, not only from fear and constraint, but chearfully in discharge of

a good conscience. Therefore our argument for the Divine institution of civil authority, rests upon the uniformity of Providence, in bringing mankind under government ; upon the clear testimony of scripture ; and upon our Lord's repeated instructions to his disciples to yield a willing homage to rulers, even when they are neither of their faith, nor even of exemplary morals.

Not that God hath ordained any particular form of Government. This is left to the judgment of men, and the circumstances of particular countries and communities. But some government is necessary. God wills mankind to be in subordination, and that they stand to each other in the relation of rulers and subjects. He does not set up the claim of Kings, to an indefeasible and hereditary right : Such a claim is without support in scripture, and is repugnant to common sense. The leading idea of scripture is, That communities constitute certain of their brethren to rule over them : and thus constituted, they are the *ordinance* of the Supreme Ruler.

OUR argument is not, That every power which assumes to be authority is really so ; or that God would have it acknowledged as his institution.

Usurpers

Usurpers and incurable tyrants are not the ordinance of God. Invaders are to be rejected as hostile to civil authority and subversive of government. The Apostle would show, That rulers allowed by long use, submitted to by promises of allegiance, or introduced according to the stated maxims of the community over whom they preside, are invested with power by God himself, and are to be obeyed by Christians as his ordinance; and this, however their characters may be faulty, and their administrations in many respects injudicious and reprehensible.

I proceed to prove,

II. THAT civil authority is instituted for the good of the people in general, and for the benefit of the church of Christ in particular.

*He is the Minister of God to THEE for GOOD.*

THAT God has instituted civil authority for the common good, is a full demonstration, that he utterly abhors that tyranny and oppression, which is so frequently practised by the insolent Rulers of the earth: His benevolence is incensed at the abuse of his gifts, and the perversion of those powers and talents which he has bestowed upon magistrates for the happiness of his creatures. Rulers, who misapply their authority for their personal

personal advantage, and use the force of the State, to feed their ambition and revenge, or to gratify the guilty passions of minions and favourites, at the expence of publick misery, are singular objects of Divine resentment, and a strange punishment is prepared for them by the righteous *Avenger*. No man has authority from God for partial advantage, but for the common good. And while God suffers such rulers to hold dominion among men, he utterly abhors the injustice and wickedness of their administrations ; he will bring to swift destruction these haughty oppressors of the nations, and proportion his plagues to their violence, and to the sorrows which they have produced to their fellow men. He will eventually shew his power, and make his wrath known in their wonderful perdition.

BUT let none imagine, that God has no gracious purposes to answer by an iniquitous administration of civil government. Infatiable oppressors, bloody conquerors and imperial butchers, are of use in the scheme of Providence, to correct and amend the revolting tribes of men. While they make the earth to tremble, and turn fruitful fields into a desolate wilderness, they are the messengers of divine displeasure, the rod of God's anger, and the staff of his indignation, against an hypocritical and

and rebellious people. If a wise and merciful administration will not correct the dissoluteness of an obdurate people, God scourges them with the stings of scorpions; with the relentless cruelty and ambition of unprincipled tyrants. Such dispensations are necessary, both to reclaim the disobedient, and as an example of retributive justice upon the incorrigible, that others may shun the rocks on which they split.

God's judgments are full of mercy. That greatest temporal calamity which men experience, an unrighteous administration of civil power, has yet a gracious mixture of compassion, and tends to make perfect the scheme of Providence.

But a good and equal administration of government, is a blessing to the community in a different sense. The enjoyments and tranquility of subjects are secured by the protection of rulers. To advance general happiness, to secure property, to increase true, rational liberty, and to preserve the lives of men, are the original purposes for which civil laws and magistrates are ordained by heaven. The Supreme Ruler has given to magistrates no warrant to pursue unequal or partial measures; to consult personal or family interests; nor to foster

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the wishes and pursuits of cringing favourites.—The sword of the state is not committed to them for the exclusive advantage of particular societies or classes of men. To promote the general good, to cherish virtue, and to diffuse joyous prosperity through the whole community, are the ends for which God has exalted them to power. And they may pursue the interests of individuals, only in consistency with the public benefit. The design of their institution, is to encourage virtue, to protect good men, to frown upon the courses of the wicked, and to repress that fraud and injustice, by which oppressors consume the faithful of the land, and devour the widow and him who hath no helper.

OUR Apostle would teach the civil authority, that the great objects of their care, are to cherish virtue, and extirpate vice ; to avenge public and individual wrongs ; to curb the excesses of selfish avarice and ambition, and to foster that philanthropy and integrity, by which alone, nations can be built up and established. And they would do well to remember, that not only the general welfare of the community is a principal object with all rulers who pursue the end of their appointment, but that God requires of them, a constant and watchful

watchful attention to the happiness of the church of Christ ; and for this plain reason, that magistrates can in no way so substantially promote the common good, as by honouring the doctrines and followers of Jesus. Whatever infidel wits may dream to the contrary, Jesus Christ is appointed by the Father to an universal kingdom. \* *For the Father hath committed all judgment to the Son.* † *And gave him to be head over all things to the Church.* By him Kings reign, and at his pleasure he sets up and casts down all human rule and authority. And those are short sighted politicians, who pay no special regard to Christ. As the Governor of all States, he will be acknowledged Supreme, *sitting in the assemblies of the mighty, and judging among the Gods.* States who have heard of Christ and his exaltation, and give him no public acknowledgements, are profanely impious against the Father and the Son, and may well fear the wrath of the Lamb. Let rulers then receive their power, as proceeding from Christ, and by solemn testimonies of respect to him and to his disciples, honour him as their Sovereign : And thus *kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and they perish from the way.* They are ordained for the particular benefit of the Church, for the prosperity of which, all the wheels of Pro-

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vidence,

\* John, v. 22.

† Eph. i. 22.

vidence, and all the revolutions of empire, have been in motion from the morning of time. It should lie upon the minds of rulers, especially of those who make a profession, *that they believe the truth of the Christian religion*, to honour Christ by a true profession, and an answerable life, and by their immediate regards in all their administrations, to the prosperity and dignity of Christ's family upon earth. This is God's governing end in their appointment to rule, that his children *may lead peaceable and quiet lives in godliness and honesty*. It is a gross mistake, an affront upon the Lord of all worlds, to affirm, that civil magistrates have nothing to do for the church of Christ. Their paramount Sovereign, has taught them, that they cannot discharge their civil trust, without a diligent attention to his church upon earth. As well may the minister of an earthly Prince alledge, that he has nothing to do for the peace and dignity of his master's family, as civil rulers can alledge, that they have no concern with the church, the family of the King of Zion. The magistrates most assiduous and unwearied labours are due by his appointment to the church of God.

Our attention is called under the next head, to specify,

### III. WHAT measures the civil authority must pursue, to answer the end of their institution.

THE God of Heaven, who setteth up Kings, and removeth Kings at his pleasure, gives to rulers the kingdom, strength, power, and glory, for the benefit of his people. To answer this benevolent purpose of Heaven, should be the magistrates first employment. How this purpose may be most effectually answered is our present enquiry. And here I shall be indulged in several particulars. And

1st, To be the minister of God for good, the ruler must enterrain an ardent love for his people.

Love is the main spring of every interchange of kind offices amongst men. In no case has this Divine principle a more efficacious operation, than when the ruler's heart is inspired with a paternal affection towards his subjects. To be the father of his people, is the magistrate's dignity : This constitutes his nearest conformity to our universal Parent : This will animate him to prosecute the common happiness, under all temptations, and in seasons of the most pressing trials and difficulties : Without this, he will faint under the perverseness and ingratitude of his people, when they oppose his labours for their good, and ill requite his faithful and painful services for national establishment

blishment and prosperity. Love animated the patience and perseverance of Moses, to plead for Israel in their numerous rebellions, and finally to pledge his own prosperity, for their salvation, when he prayed that God would spare them, altho' to vindicate his justice, he should blot him out of his book; that is, cut him off from a name and inheritance among the tribes of the Lord, in the land of promise.

THIS noble affection filled David with all the agonies of distress, and the importunity of prayer, that God would spare the sheep of his flock, from the sword of the destroying Angel, which was drawn over Jerusalem. This fortified Nehemiah, to a life of self-denial, conflict and danger, while he built the city of his father's sepulchres. And this will give energy to the endeavours of all magistrates for the prosperity of their brethren, and make them to esteem diligence, watchfulness, personal expence, self-denial, continual humiliation and supplication before God, but reasonable and pleasant services for the public benefit. That he may pursue their prosperity, the ruler must cultivate a tender and benevolent affection for his people. Again,

2dly, To be God's minister for good, the ruler must learn the characters and interest of his people.

IGNORANT

IGNORANT and uninformed Statesmen, however honest in their intentions, can do very little for the happiness of the community. Their limited views create local prejudices, and subject them to the artifices of interested politicians. While a part of the community make undue advantages of their ignorant mismanagement, the body languishes and withers away for want of counsel, energy and uniformity in the civil administration. It concerns rulers, therefore, to be well acquainted with the tempers, capacities, views and interests of the citizens, in all parts of their government, that they may adapt their administration to the advantage of the whole, without material injury to individuals. Rulers unacquainted with the interests of the several professions, and the reputation and capacities of the principal characters, will make grievous mistakes in government, by confining their labours to a narrow circle, and by losing the services of the most suitable men in the community. What is more preposterous, than for rulers to exert their influence and authority, for the partial interest of the territory in their vicinity, to make the interest of one class or profession yield to the avarice and ambition of another ; to be a stickler for this or that faction in the State ? A ruler should have an enlarged heart,

a noble, well-instructed mind ; able to comprehend the characters and interests of his brethren, and disposed, with a generous impartiality and diffusive benevolence, to speak peace to all his seed. And for this end he must study the dispositions, the employments, the weaknesses and abilities, and the substantial interests of all his subjects. This knowledge is essentially requisite to be an useful and reputable magistrate. Again,

3dly, To be a minister for good to the people, the ruler must be instructed in the political maxims and laws of the State, in which he governs.

THE safety of a people, especially of a free people, depends upon a sacred adherence to the original principles of their government. When those principles are disregarded, every blessing is insecure, and the administration degenerates into an arbitrary despotism. Therefore rulers should understand the system of laws, and those forms of administration, to which the people are accustomed, and conform themselves to those original principles ; then they will have a line of conduct in their office, and the people will know what to expect from them. As a general knowledge of civil policy is necessary to make an *accomplished* ruler, so a thorough acquaintance with their own state policy,

licy, is necessary to make a *tolerable* one. When ignorance is in place, the people will mourn, and folly and wickedness be exalted on every side. It was an essential qualification for government in Solomon, \* That God had given him *wisdom and largeness of heart, very much; even as the sand upon the sea-shore.* † *Wo to thee, O land, when thy King is a child.* The curse of ignorant uninformed rulers, is taught us by the prophet Isaiah, ‡ *And I will give children to be their Princes, and babes shall rule over them: As for my people, cbildren are their oppressors, and woman rule over them: O my people, they which lead thee, cause thee to err.* And saith Solomon, § *The Prince that wanteth understanding, is also a great oppressor.* But by wisdom and understanding the throne is established, and the expectations of the people are richly gratified. No man therefore, should undertake to rule amongst men, until he is fully instructed into the civil constitution and laws of the community, where he is to govern. Again,

4thly. To promote the public good, rulers must be controuled in all their measures, by truth and integrity.

For wisdom without integrity, will soon degenerate into cunning and artifice, by which the interests of the community will fall a prey to those who

\* 1 Kings, iv. 29.

‡ Isaiah, iii, 4, 12.

† Eccles. x. 16.

§ Prov. xxviii, 16.

who should be their friendly protectors. A magistrate without truth and sincerity, is the snare and perdition of his subjects. All power should be founded in truth, both in the attainment and exercise of it. \* *The lip of truth shall be established for ever : but a lying tongue is but for a moment.* † *Excellent speech becometh not a fool, much less do lying lips a prince.* An administration founded in truth and righteousness, will bear the test of scrutiny : and measures dictated by honesty, shall come forth approved and prosperous in the end : while the duplicity of deceitful politicians shall perish, and involve both rulers and subjects in the snares of perplexity and ruin. All men, especially all leading men, carry their measures with the most success and reputation, when they prosecute them with simple uniformity and honest sincerity. It should therefore be the first object with him who rules over men, to be just, to be true in his administrations : not having a mysterious system of delusion to deceive others into his fraudulent intentions.

To gain the confidence of their subjects, rulers must be men upon whom they may safely depend. And without this confidence, subjects can derive very little advantage from government. Men in place,

\* Prov. xii. 19.

† Prov. xvii. 7.

place, therefore, must make declarations and promises strictly just and clearly intelligible, and by adhering to them, the subject must know what to expect from authority. Rulers, to be useful, must deal fairly and honestly with the people ; distribute equal justice ; protect them from wrongs, and punish injuries with integrity and decision : not leave honest men the prey of fraud.

IT is a sad time, when rulers are so inattentive to justice and veracity, that truth falleth in the streets, and he who departeth from iniquity, maketh himself a prey. Good rulers make fair promises and keep them, and are exemplary in fulfilling contracts. The magistrate who defrauds his subjects, will have a poor face to punish individuals who defraud one another. Do rulers wish to be public blessings? then let them keep good the public faith, sustain the credit of the state, and pay punctually the public contracts. This will give energy to government, establish the influence and credit of authority, and teach the people that uprightness and veracity, by which alone the various members of society can be closely cemented. A dissembler and a cheat among individuals, is a base character ; and a fraudulent administration of government, is a character as much more detestible, as the number and authority of the rulers exceed

one individual. Some have acted as though a fraud or falsehood might be lost in the number of partners, or be sanctified by great and powerful names ; But he who sitteth in the Heavens, will manifest their error, and prove, *\* that lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, that they are but for a moment, that the feet of unrighteous rulers stand in slippery places ; and when the good man feeth their end, he shall suddenly curse their habitation.* Does the ruler wish to be useful and reputable ? Let him be a true and honest man. Would he involve himself and the community in infamy and perplexity ? Let him be unequal in his administrations ; let his performances contradict his promises ; by false weights and false measures of justice and equity, let him frame iniquity by law, and teach the Lord's people to transgress. Again,

5thly, To rule well, the magistrate must cultivate habits of industry and frugality.

RULERS have so much to do, that they have no time to lose. An indolent ruler, like the useless and unwieldly drone, devours the honey which others have gathered. He consumes the people's tribute without earning it. The support which

subjects

\* Prov. xii. 22.

subjects should liberally furnish for the maintenance of government, rulers should merit by their diligent services. And while they carefully avoid avarice in withholding expences for the public good, it concerns them to use the revenues of the State, with œconomy, that no part of the public treasure be applied, to useless and trifling purposes. Covetousness and prodigality are both mischievous vices in rulers, and they should avoid each extreme, if they would be blessings to the people.

INDOLENT rulers will be otherways vicious. Idleness will cloud their minds and extinguish the nobler sensations of the soul, and the most noxious weeds will spring up in their place. By their example, habits of idleness, intemperance, dissipation, gaming and profaneness, like some infectious contagion, will spread through all ranks of people. An enervated, poor and contemptible people will be the consequence of an indolent and dissipated administration of government. Such wicked rulers will rule over a poor, worthless people ; the community will sink into effeminacy, dependance and wretchedness. It becomes the magistrate then to be a man of busines, not a man of pleasure ; to be attentive to his office, and painful in his exertions for the common good. Thus shall his example

ample recommend hardiness, patience, frugality and self-denial to his subjects; and through the prevalence of these virtues, they shall be able to meet the enemy in the gate, and rise with lustre among the nations. It was the maxim of a Grecian Prince, worthy to be adopted by the Christian magistrate, *It ill becomes a Statesman, to sleep all night.*

THE virtues of industry, and well-judged frugality, are the support of republican governments, and are therefore peculiarly requisite in their civil authority, who by their example, should teach the people habits of diligence, hardiness and œconomy, not to consume, according to the baneful customs of our republics, in dissipation and luxury, much more than we earn by our labour and industry. Again,

6thly, To answer the purpose of their institution, civil rulers must protect good citizens, and punish the wicked.

THE scripture character of rulers is, *That they are not a terror to good works, but to the evil.* Power is grossly abused and perverted, when wicked citizens are fostered and protected by authority. God has ordained rulers to avenge the wrongs of injustice and oppression, and the violences of sedition and rebellion. It is only when bad men are in authority,

thority, that vile men are exalted and screened from justice. No favour or friendship, no relation or connection with men in power, should cover the wicked from punishment. Rulers are to execute the laws : And the laws are made for the lawless and disobedient. All delays of justice, the exemption from chastisement, which corrupt citizens receive in breaking the peace and violating the ordinances of justice, is a sore malady in the State, and proves that the head is sick and the heart faint. Good magistrates, by their influence, suppress immorality, and every transgression of relative justice. God commands it; and faithful subjects have a claim upon their rulers, to be protected from fraud and oppression, to have the laws executed, their persons, their liberty and property protected, from the depredations of designing and unprincipled men. And the magistrate who does not endeavour to punish and reclaim, or utterly to purge from the State wicked and disobedient subjects, forgets the main design of his exaltation. And when good men are left to the fear and danger of losing their privileges and possessions, they are sadly neglected ; and the God of Heaven, will avenge their quarrel against such slothful and unrighteous magistrates. To let the wicked

go unpunished, and the righteous live without protection, is both a contemptible weakness and a scandalous wickedness in authority. \* *For it should be an abomination to Kings to do wickedness, and the throne is established by righteousness.* † *Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is the reproach of any people.* ‡ *He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the Lord.* For this end rulers wait upon their work to make a clear distinction between the just and the unjust ; and it is an illustrious display of benevolence, to over-whelm incorrigible offenders by the arm of power, and raise to safety and honour the faithful of the land. It is a precept grounded upon moral reasons, and consequently of perpetual obligation,—§ *The man that will do presumptuously and will not hearken unto the Priest, which standeth there to minister before the Lord thy God, or unto the judge, even that man shall die ; and thou shall put away the evil from Israel.* The State must employ punishments adequate to the suppression of vice, and rewards commensurate to the encouragement of virtue and fidelity : And the ruler who permits the rod of the wicked to rest upon the lot of the righteous, is disobedient to God, and an enemy to his people. Again,

7thly.

\* Prov. xvi. 12.

† Prov. xiv. 34.

‡ Prov. xvii. 15.

§ Deut. xvii. 12.

7thly, RULERS, to be ministers of God for good, must be men of religion.

ALL christian graces are of immediate use in the administration of government. And as rulers receive their ordination from God, he expects that as servants they honour him, and obey his Son Jesus Christ, as their liege Lord. Since religion furnishes men with those excelling gifts and good dispositions, which qualify them to govern, so they can never cultivate faith and piety with too careful an assiduity. Their success in office, and their usefulness among their subjects, depend primarily upon the Divine presence and blessing. Therefore they should be men of exemplary faith in their King and Saviour, and not lean unto their own understanding. That illustrious magistrate Nehemiah, thought it a most essential qualification in his brother Hananiah, to take charge over Jerusalem. \* *Because he was a faithful man and feared God above many.* Magistrates should be men of prayer, that God may dwell with them and direct their counsels. They should be accustomed to appear before God in the posture of suppliants, that he would enlighten their ignorance, and prosper their exertions. None have more need of wisdom, than they ; and to whom should they apply

\* Neh. vii. 2.

ply but to him *who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not.* Would they be honoured by the obedience of their subjects ? Let them obtain this honour by obeying God, by lives of temperance, sobriety and a becoming gravity. Like their blessed Master, let them be meek, humble and gentle towards all men ; like him, love righteousness and hate iniquity, be constant, watchful and fervant in duty, bearing the sorrows, and relieving the distresses of their fellow men ; like him *go about doing good.* It is incumbent upon them, to honor Christ in his institutions, setting a pattern before their brethren of family religion, resolving with the pious and valiant Joshua, That as for us and our houses, we will serve the Lord ; attending uniformly upon the ordinances of public worship, hallowing God's Sabbaths, and reverencing his sanctuary, attentively waiting upon the dispensation of the gospel. From rulers we may well expect submission to all God's commandments, and that they cherish the appointed means of diffusing christian knowledge, and by honouring Christ's ministers and followers, become *nursing fathers to the Church.* Some have thought that religion is no important part of a ruler's character : It is true, that rulers without religion are to be obeyed. But when it is considered

dered that they are made rulers ultimately for the good and prosperity of the Church, we must censure those for their ignorance or irreligion, who adopt a maxim so pernicious to civil society, and embarrassing to the interests of virtue and morality. Without religion, rulers have no God, unto whom they may repair and expect his blessing upon their administration. God is not with them, and when his presence is withdrawn, darkness and perplexity will fill their paths with snares and adversity. Immoral and ungodly rulers may affect courtesy, affability and patriotism to gain popularity ; but they have no moral principle upon which the public may depend, and too often have they proved the scourge of the community, and the rod of God's indignation against a profane or hypocritical people. Therefore we lay it down as a qualification of great moment to the State, that magistrates be men of piety, who have a governing regard to the glory of God, and a warm affection for the gospel of Christ. Such are the sentiments avowed in our form of government, which requires the great officers of government, before they enter upon their trust, to declare their belief of the Christian religion, as the religion taught from Heaven, for the happiness and salvation of lost men. Again,

8thly, To influence them to a useful discharge of their trust, it is important, that rulers keep in mind their mortality and their future account before the bar of God.

\* *I have said, ye are Gods : and all of you are children of the Most High. But ye shall die like men. Like their brethren of the dust they shall go to the grave, the house appointed for all the living. To death succeeds their solemn account at the tribunal of the son of man, who will judge the secrets of men according to our gospel. The wife, the great and the mighty of the earth, will stand before the impartial judgement-seat, upon a level with the despised and indigent of their subjects. At that solemn hour when the opinions of men shall be lighter than the dust of the balance, and the flattering tongue shall be put to perpetual silence, when the judgment shall be the Lord's and shall be administered without respect of persons, the enquiry will be, not whether we have been great in the earth, enjoyed the applause of our fellow worms, and exercised dominion among the sons of the dust : but whether we have filled our station, kept in view our last account, and prepared matters for our acquittal at the solemn trial. Rulers should remember that their reward will be in exact*

exact proportion to their benevolence and fidelity, not according to their power and authority ; and that their punishment will not be alleviated by any instances of present impunity from the impotence of human justice : but according to their sloth and luxury, their wantonness and ambition, their oppression and avarice, such will be their retribution from the sentence of the Lord of Sabaoth, who hears the groans of injured and neglected subjects, and has prepared a strange punishment for the haughty oppressors of the earth.

WERE this day of retribution, which will soon overtake us all, duly realized by magistrates, how could they fail to discharge with assiduity and care their sacred trust, and to be in earnest to become ministers of God for good, to the people ? Having stated the methods, by which rulers may answer the benevolent purposes of Heaven in their appointment, it concerns us under the last general head,

#### IV. To point out the obligations of subjects to the civil authority.

IT is the prerogative of a free people to appoint men from among their brethren to rule over them. It is their duty and only security to use this prerogative with discretion and fidelity, \* *not using their liberty*

\* 1 Pet. ii. 16.

*liberty as a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.* They are required to look out from among them, chosen and faithful men, who know the times, men of unshaken integrity and fortitude, of industry and temperance, who love their nation, and are examples of gentleness and philanthropy, *who fear God and hate covetousness.* When they have appointed their rulers, both obligation and interest require them to be in subjection to them, as the ordinance of God ; and under them to lead peaceable and quiet lives, in all godliness and honesty. They should strengthen the hands of their rulers in the work of government, treat with liberality their administrations, and studiously avoid a mean spirit of jealousy and suspicion, that bane of society and destruction of public blessings. A haughty, unyielding and murmuring disposition, is the infamy of subjects, and will prove their eventual ruin from the justice of God, who wills that his ordinances be respected by men. They *who despise government, are presumptuous, self-willed, and are not afraid to speak evil of dignities, and speak evil of things which they know not,* have little sense of their duty to magistrates, are disturbers of the public peace, and *shall utterly perish in their own corruption.*\* The word of inspiration testifies to us the will of Christ, respecting the obligations of subjects to civil authority. It

\* II. Pet. ii. 10, 12.

is a leading duty, That subjects pray for their rulers, and offer up in public and private, acknowledgements for the blessings of government, and supplications for Divine favour upon the civil administration. Saith the Apostle, *\* I exhort therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions and giving thanks, be made for all men. For Kings and for all that are in authority ; that we may live a peaceable and quiet life, in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour.* It is a Divine injunction, *† Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake ; whether it be unto the King as supreme, or unto Governours as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well. For it is the will of God, that with well doing, ye put to silence the ignorance of foolish men. Fear God, honour the King.* If kingly government deserves such conscientious obedience, how much more does a free government deserve it ? It is required of Christian ministers to inculcate this duty upon their hearers. *‡ Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work.* All who hope in his mercy, and would be saved by the righteousness of Christ, must imitate that example of submission to civil authority, which in his life he hath set

before

before them ; not by ambition and turbulent passions, disturb the quiet of society ; not by tumults and sedition augment the miseries of this miserable world. Men who have not a temper of subordination, are not charitable, humble and quiet in their demeanor, are poorly qualified for heaven. Men who resist lawful authority, and are engaged in tumults and confusion, may be fit for the realms of anarchy, darkness and despotism ; but without repentance they shall never behold the seats of the blessed, where every man is content with his station. Do we wish for present security and enjoyment, for national strength and dignity ? Do we wish to behold the seats of the blessed ? Then we must obey magistrates.

I HAVE finished my doctrinal observations ; may I be indulged in some practical reflections, and sundry cursory observations upon the present situation of this Commonwealth, and the methods which God requires to be pursued for restoring and lengthening out our tranquility, and then conclude with addresses suited to this important occasion. As I have endeavoured in the whole, so in this branch of discourse I would wish to speak with the unfettered freedom of a Servant of that Prince, *whose Kingdom is not of this world.*

THIS

THIS country was planted by men of singular piety, of whom the old world was not worthy. God found them a refuge from the oppression of civil and spiritual tyranny. Having planted, he protected them from the most pressing dangers. Often hath he delivered them by signs and wonders, and by an out-stretched arm. In some feeble measure our Forefathers lived worthy of the Divine care over them, and by grateful obedience acknowledged the salutations wrought for them. But their children forgat his benefits, and by irreligion and sensuality, by dissipation and luxury, by worldliness and pride, they provoked the Holy One of Israel, to threaten them with the loss of those privileges and blessings, which he had so richly bestowed, and they had so unthankfully abused.

MANY have celebrated the virtues, and confidently predicted the rising glories of the American States. But while we continue our provocations, we may do well to enquire, Whether these flattering panegyrists *do not speak to us smooth things, and prophesy deceits?* Would not the sublime prophet Isaiah address us in another style? \* *"Hear O heavens, and give ear O earth! for the Lord hath spoken. I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. Ah sinful nation, a people laden with*

*with iniquity, a seed of evil doers, children that are corrupters, they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they have gone away backward.* Because the Lord was wroth with his heritage, he did of late raise up adversaries unto them of their brethren. The British parliament, in support of a groundless claim, levied an unnatural war against us, and assumed without warrant to be the Higher Powers in our governments.

By the will of God, and the direction of his ordinance, our civil authority, to whom our first allegiance was due, we were called to contend for our possessions, our liberties and our lives, even unto blood. Long and distressing was the conflict. In the confusions of war, and especially in the perplexities of such a war, in which the minds of the people were divided as to their duties of allegiance, order and government were essentially injured amongst us, and that spirit of subordination and loyalty, which was before habitual, was nearly lost, and for a season we were threatened with all the miseries of that people, who have no magistrate to put them in fear. But in the season of our declensions, He who remembereth mercy for his people, interposed for our help, and in due time ordained peace for us. But in nothing

was

was his grace more remarkable than in leading us out of a distempered state of partial anarchy into a state of order and government: He gave us laws and testimonies right and good, a civil constitution perhaps the most perfect in the world, which is the security of good citizens, the admiration of the wise, and the envy of tyrants : To which if if we strictly adhere, we cannot in a political sense, fail of being a happy people.

SINCE this mercy of our God upon us, in saving us from the evils of war, and plucking us from the confusions of anarchy, we have walked unworthy of his great goodness. We sang his praises, but soon forgot his benefits. We have continued to indulge those follies and excesses, for which he had already chastized us. While deeply involved in debt, our distempered passion for the fashions of luxurious and affluent nations, plunged us into our former prodigality and unprofitable expences. Instead of applying ourselves to discharge the claims of public and private creditors, and thus to vindicate our honour and independence, we employed the riches of our soil in purchasing the trappings of an exotic dress, and in indulging our vitiated appetites in the expensive productions of distant regions, and thus are we become the servants of foreigners, and strangers.

rule over us. Poor and dependent, our minds are enervated to the pursuits of national freedom and dignity. And yet restless under the unavoidable pressure of our follies, we are little inclined to satisfy our creditors, and pay the price of our beloved dissipation. Like the prodigal, exhausted and worn down by riot, we complain of our pains and embarrassments, and idly resolve into a grievance, that poverty, from which no created power but our own can save us. Jaded by our vices, indigent through profuse living, rendered untractable by long exemption from the restraints of human and Divine laws, and proud in a licentious liberty, that fore-runner of despotism, we have become restless under necessary burdens, and with a mistaken resentment, have complained of public requisitions as the source of our sorrows and perplexities. Lavish expences have made us poor, and a temper not duly subordinate, has turned our complaints from our own follies, against our Fathers, our best friends and benefactors. How many of us have laboured to free ourselves from the necessary burdens of public and private debts, that we might obtain a wider scope for the indulgence of appetites, which it were much better to mortify?

WILL the enquiry be thought immodest, when I ask, whether our wealthy and leading characters, have

have not been first in this transgression ? Of the legislators of our republican government, we might have expected effectual laws to discourage excesses, by which the citizens are so certainly degraded to a state of servility and dependence. They knew better than their constituents, the evil of such excesses. Might they not in due season, have encouraged industry, temperance and frugality, among the people ; laid restrictions upon foreign luxuries, and made it as necessary as it was useful, for the people to produce the accommodations of life by their own labour, and upon their own soil. And especially might not the examples of men in power, and families of fashion and affluence, in preferring the productions of our own country, to commodities received from abroad, have produced the most salutary effects among all classes of our citizens ? Such examples would have been more influential and authoritative, than a whole code of commercial regulations. This is one of our wounds ; I mention it freely, since I hope in a good Providence, that our rulers, our public teachers and the multitude of our brethren, will think it important to apply themselves to a radical cure of the evil. For nothing kills the noble spirit of freedom, like a state of dependence, which

will

will ever attend the folly of spending more than we earn. Let our rulers not merely in word, but in deed, by a laudable example, be first in this matter, and teach republicans to be honest, industrious and frugal in their modes of living. Then shall substantial wealth and independence be the joyous portion, of all classes of our happy citizens.

THAT we have been transgressors in many moral and Christian duties, the God of judgement hath testified, in the calamities brought upon us. To punish and to reclaim us, he hath sent among us the rod of his visitation. \* *Shall there be evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it?*

THE last year, a year equally distinguished for the gifts of Providence, and for our unthankfulness and disobedience to human and Divine authority, has been fruitful in new and perplexing evils. God has suffered a spirit of insurrection and resistance of lawful authority to rise up in this Commonwealth. As a correction from him, it is a righteous testimony of his holy displeasure; as proceeding from man, perhaps an opposition to government, and a war against the community, has been seldom more wanton and unprovoked.

The

\* Amos, iii. 6.

The objects sought after, in these tumults, have been of the most faulty kind. One avowed end was to compel the Legislature, into an emission of a paper currency, to be a tender in payment of all public and private contracts. A measure wholly preposterous, when the public ought to be discharging their old obligations, and not contracting a new debt by borrowing money by an emission of paper ; a measure totally unjust, and as truly impolitic as to administer opiates to cure a lethargy. The faultiness of such violent attempts arose also from the utter impossibility in the present state of our affairs, that the Legislature could make a promise upon their paper and keep it ; that is, they could never honestly redeem the money, by saving it from a rapid depreciation, and making punctual payment. Such a measure then, would have been a gross violation of commutative justice, the unwavering observance of which, is enjoined upon all bodies of men under all possible circumstances. To endeavour by hostility to compel the Legislature into a measure, which they wisely thought impolitic, and knew to be palpably unjust, was an high handed offence, and clearly proves, that multitudes were under the clouds of God's anger, and were sadly forsaken of restraining grace.

BUT

BUT the design was filled with other mischiefs. It was to wrest from the Legislature the power of governing; from the tribunals of law the power of decreeing justice; and from the Executive, the essential prerogative of carrying into effect the laws of the Commonwealth. Thus were our foundations to have been destroyed. The declared intentions of the malecontents, and what they attempted by levying an impious war upon their country, was to arrest the arm of government, and seize the administration of a despotic rule into their own hands; to sap the foundations of our glorious constitution, to change its essential forms, and thus to break down the barriers of our rights, and overwhelm this great republic in dreary confusion and irretrievable ruin. Whoever has been acquainted with their complaints and their claims, and has been the witness of their proceedings, will consider this, as a charitable representation of their views and pursuits.

BLESSED be the Lord God of our salvation, that in the midst of our unworthiness and provocations, he has interposed and saved us from the sword of the oppressor, and the violence of wicked men. Ardent thanksgivings are this day due to the

the Father of mercies, That in the season of alarming dangers, he raised up an administration of government, who, in the faithful page of history, will be celebrated for their wisdom, their moderation and integrity.

AFTER many outrageous and treasonable excesses had prevailed, in several parts of the State, and the lives and estates of their guilty authors were forfeited to their country, our Chief Magistrate, at the request of the Legislature, offered a free and full pardon to all the promoters and abettors of those seditious tumults. Through an infatuated obduracy, that pardon was scornfully rejected, even under the clearest light and evidence exhibited to them, that their complaints were groundless, and that the government had been administered with great integrity. Former violences were renewed, the criminal demands of the insurgents increased, and the existence of the Commonwealth, was put to the hazard. When unmixed mercy could not reclaim but raised to higher excesses the resistance of the offenders, authority assumed a more firm and decisive tone, and raised a military force to repel their violence. Yet great was the forbearance and compassion of government in all their exertions to suppress the rebellion. Forgiveness was still extended

tended to the body of the rebels, the leaders only were left to the justice of the law, and even with the leaders much lenity was used by proffering terms of pardon to many of them. The steps of our civil administration were the marks of their justice and humanity. The wisdom and decision of the Council, demand our admiration and gratitude : the measures of our Chief Magistrate all denoted the firmness of his spirit, his regard for our laws, his inflexible adherence to the principles of the constitution, and his unshaken determination to protect his country, and repress the violence of wicked men. His conduct was equally distinguished for benignity and moderation, that aversion from bloodshed and that ardent wish to recover and preserve offenders, which is a shining part of the character of a good man and a christian magistrate. He hath shewed himself *the FATHER and FRIEND of his country. The minister of God for good to his people.*

THAT worthy personage who acted under his immediate orders in suppressing the public commotions, has added fresh laurels to his former honors, and evinced how much he deserves the appellation of the CHRISTIAN HERO. The officers and men employed in this important and unwelcome service,

service, by their firm, temperate and wise conduct, discovered that excellent spirit which ought ever to reign in the bosoms of free citizens. Ye authors and leaders of these happy operations, if we forget your services, let our right hand forget its cunning. Thou country *thus* saved of the Lord from the horns of the unicorn, if we do not remember thee above our chief joy, let our tongue cleave to the roof of our mouth.

THRONES of judgement are established, and the seat of violence is driven from us : and by the uninterrupted execution of our wholesome laws, we may sit quietly under our own vines and under our own fig-trees. And we may gladly hope, that without connivance from men of influence, these seeds of sedition will e'er long be totally eradicated from our republic. The methods of Providence in protecting the Commonwealth and succeeding the measures of government, merit particular notice and unfeigned gratitude. The singer of God has been conspicuous in directing and prospering our public counsels. Operations dictated by wisdom and moderation, have been succeeded by remarkable interpositions of Heaven. The hearts of those in rebellion melted like wax, and they

could perform no part of their enterprize ; and the measures of administration were crowned with the wished for success.

MAY the author of all effectual influences impress the minds of deluded citizens with a conviction of the criminality of their conduct, and of the evident hand of God, which was lifted up against them. It is but justice to observe, that the measures of government, have been conformable to the system of God's government over a sinful world. Mercy has been freely proffered, and when despised, has been followed by a mixture of judgement and mercy. Because the Lord loved his people, he hath inclined the hearts of their rulers into such a prosperous and salutary administration. To regard these foot-steps of Providence, and pursue a similar system of administration, can scarcely fail to recover us from our confusions, and establish our public tranquility. But inattention to the finger of God, and an abuse of his healing mercies, the continuance of our rebellions and resistance of his civil ordinance, will provoke him to empty us from vessel to vessel, *and for the iniquities of our land, many will be the rulers thereof : unstable as water we shall not excel.* But if conscious of past ingratitude and abuse of blessings, we will turn unto him by repentance

repentance and works of righteousness, will speak the truth one to another and love as brethren ; if our rulers will go before us in the duties of prayer, faith and obedience, submision to Christ, and respect to his do&trines and institutions ; if they will love the people and consult their interest by integrity and goodness, study rather to do them good than to gratify their idle humours ; if they will measure their administrations by the line of truth and honesty, although thousands frown ; if they will be temperate and industrious in their work, will punish the wicked and protect obedient subjects, and thus set the Lord alway before their face, then shall their reputation flourish and their authority prove an unspeakable blessing to the people : \* *God shall fill Zion with judgement and righteousness, and wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of our times and strength of salvation : And the fear of the Lord shall be our treasure ; and he shall lift us high among the nations.*

The time calls me to a conclusion, in suitable addresses.

Our first attention is due to our worthy Chief Magistrate, called by God and his country to the chair of government.

*May*

\* *Isaiah xxxiii. 5, 6.*

*May it please your Excellency,*

THAT happy tranquillity which we enjoyed under your former administration, cannot fail to excite our congratulations, that God has so far restored your health, that you are able to accept the Chief Magistracy in this Commonwealth. Appointed by God to bear rule over your brethren, you will be pleased to accept our best wishes that your health may be adequate to the weighty burthens of your high and sacred office. Our prayer to the Almighty is, that he would be the health of your countenance and your God ; that he would strengthen you to eminent usefulness among his people. May divine preservation and illumination accompany your administrations, that you may continue to act worthily for Christ our King, and be accepted of the multitude of your brethren. May that diffusive love which you so early manifested for your country, by placing yourself in the first rank of dangers, to repel foreign usurpation, and vindicate the privileges and laws of your country, still animate you, to pursue the happiness of the community, by supporting the dignity of civil authority, the prerogatives and independence of the Supreme Executive, and the other branches of administration ; by making law terrible to all invaders and usurpers of the powers

of government, and by drawing a line of distinction between faithful subjects, and those who may be so lost to virtue, as to disturb the public peace, and assail the property, the liberties and the lives of their fellow-citizens.

WITH pleasing anticipation, we behold your Excellency God's minister for good, bearing the sword of the State, not as a terror to good works, but to the evil. Our eye with delight marks your path, while you lead us your children into the duties of relative and Christian life, and by your example teach us, that self-denial, frugality and industry, so essential to the happiness of a free people. From your Excellency, will our Legislature expect advice in those measures, which may maintain inviolate the principles of our civil constitution against every species of encroachment ; how the public good is to be pursued, honesty and integrity, diligence and application encouraged, and dissipation driven from the State ; how the laws of justice may be effectually vindicated, and the seat of fraud and oppression, be removed far from us. Our expectations are from your Excellency, That liberty shall be maintained by law, and all subjects be secure in their possessions ; that public faith, and national credit and dignity, be sollicitously preserved.

MAY the institutions of literature flourish under your friendly patronage ; especially may that illustrious university to which the public is so much indebted for laying the foundation of science in your Excellency, and qualifying you for such extensive services in this, and through the United States, be the object of your peculiar care, and by your powerful influence be protected in all its important rights and immunities.

WE hope in the goodness of the universal Parent, that by affording you his presence and grace, he will shew, that because he loved his people, he hath therefore appointed you to rule over them. From your Excellency, the interests of piety and the Christian religion, justly expect continual aid and friendly countenance. May the Angel of the Divine presence, enlighten and beautify the paths of your administration. In your days, religion, truth and peace dwell on the earth, and after you have served your generation by the will of God, may you receive the rewards of your fidelity, from the approbation of your Judge. May you here enjoy a portion, better than many sons, and late be welcomed to the presence of your Divine Saviour and Judge, and from him obtain that Crown of glory which fadeth not away.

OUR respects are now due to the Gentlemen who compose the Honourable the Senate, and the Honourable the House of Representatives.

*Fathers of our country, and Elders of our tribes,*

YOU are this day constituted by Jesus Christ, the ordinance of God, for the good of his church, and the welfare of this Commonwealth. The oath of God is upon you, to maintain the laws of the State, and the sacred principles of our excellent constitution : A constitution which wisdom will approve, as the national bulwark of our independence and sovereignty, the effectual protection of good citizens, the security of freedom, property and life, and our defence against the rude encroachments of anarchy and despotism. You have this day declared your belief of the Christian religion. Integrity in this profession will lead you to prize our constitution the more, since it is so friendly to morality, and the Christian faith. You have bound yourselves in the discharge of your office, to promote the common good upon gospel principles ; by cultivating in your temper, and practice, those benevolent graces of Christianity, which will enable you to rule with reputation to yourselves, and advantage to the people. You have pledged yourselves to honor Christ's institutions, to protect his servants, to discountenance all contempt of the doctrines

and

and maxims of his holy faith. Thus from the manner of your inauguration, we may expect, that you be nursing Fathers to the Church. It becomes a minister of that Church, (and will therefore be acceptable to you) to stir up your pure minds to use the gift that is in you, for the good of the people. You are the Ministers of God, and as such, accountable at the tribunal of the Son of Man, in the great day of dread decision. Let me exhort you as candidates for eternity, to keep in mind that solemn day, and as faithful servants, to be habitually prepared for it. And that through Divine grace, you may give up a good account at last, be entreated to regard the eye of God, which is upon you, and look to him to pardon your unworthiness, to counsel you by his unerring wisdom, and to quicken you by his truth : That he would not take his Holy Spirit from you, but by his effectual influences, guide you into the paths of uprightness. The scriptures will teach you your liableness to err; and your desire to be useful, will excite your applications for that anointing of the Holy One, by which you will not err fatally. As Rulers, it concerns you to be men of prayer, to maintain an intercourse with Heaven, and an humble dependance upon Divine teaching and guidance. Do you wish to be honoured of God in your office? You must honour him by submitting

ing your administrations to his government, by a respect to his name, his institutions and those eternal laws of righteousness, ordained for the careful observance of all his rational subjects. With you *the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding.*—To you as their Fathers, will the people look for patterns of moral and Christian duty. You will therefore go before them in personal, in family and public religion and obedience. Care for the State will arm your zeal and fortitude against vicious and immoral practices, to frown upon gross breaches of human and Divine laws. Your services will be approved of God, and useful to the community, whenever you shall punish with decision and impartiality, the lawless practices of vicious and disobedient subjects. Through your example and official exertions shall those virtues of benevolence, integrity, industry and frugality, so essential to a republican and Christian community, greatly prevail. And your testimony shall suppress the insolence of fraud and injustice, falsehood and perjury, by which the bonds of society are dissolved. May the oath of God become terrible, and all human promises and contracts be held sacred. Punctuality in Rulers to their contracts, is the first step towards a general

honesty in the State. Their example gives energy to laws against private fraud and injustice. You will feel the bond of that law of your Master, *to owe no man anything*; but according to the ability of the people, to make a punctual and satisfactory payment of public debts. You will utterly disallow all measures, which may put honest and feeble citizens into the power of griping and unprincipled oppressors; than such measures, nothing is more repugnant to that Gospel, by which you are to be judged. Every indirect method to extricate the people from embarrassments, is a new load to sink them in the mire. The Fathers of our tribes will therefore cultivate public and private faith, and learn us all *not to go beyond, or to defraud our neighbour.*

MAY the good God influence our honourable Legislature, into a system of administration, which shall defend our Constitution, render venerable our laws, protect from violence the seats of Justice and the Throne of Judgement, and by a due mixture of mercy and justice, allure offenders to obedience, or by adequate penalties incapacitate them from disturbing the public tranquility. You will think nothing too much to encourage a spirit of loyalty and patriotism; and to this end you will encourage

encourage the means of grace and education. To your wisdom does it belong to discover the political measures, for promoting the good designs which have been mentioned, but I may suggest, that they should be such as are approved by the gospel of Christ.

OUR national concerns, as a confederated Republic, are serious concerns. Your deliberate counsels will be requisite to invent some remedy for our national imbecility and reproach. Unless effectual and liberal measures are soon taken, our glory and independence will vanish into air. Be intreated Fathers, to lay aside limited views and local prejudices, and to encompass the Union in the exertions of your wisdom and patriotism.

THE better to answer the ends of your appointment, you will consider it highly important, in filling up the vacancies in the Legislature, and in constituting a Council for His Excellency, to choose faithful and approved men, who fear God and obey Christ above many, men of noble minds, superior to intrigue, and unfettered by faction, of independent sentiments, who abhor covetous practices, men whose circumstances are not embarrassed, and who will not fear to do the thing which

which is just, who love the people, and will by personal labours and self-denial, and unwearyed diligence, pursue their solid and lasting advantages, and yet disdain by meanness and artifice, and by sacrificing their own judgement, to gain an empty popular applause.

A LEGISLATURE thus constituted, and what a respectable number of such amiable and worthy characters do I now behold ; such a Legislature, shall in the issue enjoy the blessings of their country, while time serving politicians, shall sink in the dirt of their deserved ignominy : Such a Legislature may hope to have God with them, to prosper the work of their hands. From the faithful discharge of an earthly trust, they shall in their time and order, be received to the plaudit of their final Judge. Such is the reward which we pray that every member of our public administration, in the Executive, Legislative and Judicial department, may now deserve, and in future obtain from the mouth of him, who sitteth upon the Throne.

MAY we all repent, and do our first works, that God may be in the midst of us. That he may sit in the assembly of our Rulers, is the devout supplication of all, who hope in his mercy, and wish well to this Commonwealth.

BLESSED

BLESSED art thou O Land, when thy King is the Son of nobles, and thy Princes eat in due season. *Happy is* that people, that is in such a case ; yea happy is that people, whose God is the Lord.

THUS with sincerity, and as well as I was able, have I spoken unto you the Lord's message. May the effectual co-operations of the Bleffed Spirit, render the truths which have been delivered, useful to this whole Affembly, and by the confequent fruits may it appear, that in very deed God has been among us. And when we shall severally stand in the great congregation of the affembled universe, by a precious holy life, may we be prepared to be found of our Judge in peace.

A M E N.













